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# Food and Nutrition

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**Traditional Bread  
Adds to School Lunch**



# elderly learn to Cook

**W**HY WOULD THE ELDERLY be interested in cooking classes? "Probably because their cooking situation now is entirely different from earlier years," points out Bill Brown, president of the Nowata, Okla., Chamber of Commerce.

When Brown became Chamber president about 2 years ago, he encouraged the development of programs for older people. This north-eastern Oklahoma area has a high percentage of senior citizens. About 28 percent of Nowata residents are over 65, compared with a State average of 11 percent.

Surprisingly enough, a cooking class was the first program in which the older people expressed an interest.

"It's really not so astonishing when you consider that they are preparing food for one or two persons now, whereas they formerly cooked for an entire family," says the Chamber president.

In addition, many in the community receive USDA-donated foods. Sometimes people who get these foods either don't know how to use them or tire of the "same old thing."

At first the Chamber of Commerce handled all the expense. Then they obtained donated foods from the State Institutions Social and Rehabilitative Service to use each month in the program. This State agency administers the food distribution program in cooperation with the Food and Nutrition Service.

Brown enlisted the help of Herb Covin, a retired person who was temporarily serving as Chamber manager.

Covin and Mrs. Delores Sanders, Chamber secretary, lined up a volunteer to teach the class, arranged publicity through the local newspaper and radio station, and got permission from the local Lion's Club to use its building for a meeting room.

Jim Chiles, a retired railroad chef, first conducted the cooking classes, but had to drop the project for health reasons.

Then Mrs. Fleta Markham, who has been cooking for the same Nowata family for 22 years, volunteered for the instruction.

"We have a song in my church which says, 'Help somebody along

life's way,' and that's what I am trying to do," she says.

After checking cookbooks with Mrs. Sanders for recipes which can be adapted to donated foods, Mrs. Markham gives them a try.

Although she generally prepares the food ahead of the meeting, she explains the cooking procedures to the group, pointing out special problem areas.

Brown is particularly pleased with the cooking classes. "My wife and I know from our contacts with older people living alone that many do not eat properly," he says. "When a person is alone, the incentive to prepare a meal is just not there."

Although attendance at the semi-monthly meetings seldom exceeds 35, Brown feels they are accomplishing their purpose.

"Before we started the cooking classes, we were always getting reports of persons finding commodities thrown away. Since these classes began, we haven't had a single incident of this nature."

Many who do not attend the meetings obtain the recipes and ideas from their neighbors. However, the program leaders urge attendance at the meetings, since they feel the fellowship is as important as the information.

Why has the Chamber of Commerce chosen to move into this area?

"The Chamber's responsibility is more than just to attract industry," says the Nowata Chamber of Commerce leader. "It should serve the needs of the people in the community, as well."



*Instructor Mrs. Fleta Markham usually prepares dishes before class and gives demonstrations at the group's monthly meetings. Her peanut butter pie and prune cake are favorites of the class.*





Mrs. Rufina Toledo, president of the Parents' Club of the San Diego Mission School, takes an active role in helping with the cup-can lunch program.

## Up-to-date Food Methods Blend With Tradition

By Harold C. Bryson—

**H**UDDLED AT THE foothills of the Jemez Mountains along the sandy banks of the Rio de las Vacas squats the Jemez Indian Pueblo, looking much as it must have looked to Spanish conquistadores who explored the tributaries of the Rio Grande.

Pickup trucks parked in front of most homes, television aerals on many rooftops, and flag-marked graves of boys who gave their lives in Vietnam remind you that this is the 20th century and that the Jemez people—proud, independent and as innovative as their forebearers—face the same problems as other communities.

For years one of their community problems has been how to provide an adequate lunch for the children attending the San Diego Mission School, a Catholic supported institution at the end of the road that winds through the pueblo.

With no kitchen facilities to prepare the food, no place for the children to eat, and no funds to meet these needs, the San Diego Mission priest, Father Meldon Hickey, turned to the Jemez Parents' Club for help.

If the school could get funds from the National School Lunch Program to pay for most of the food supplies, he asked, could the Parents' Club provide volunteer labor to convert an old building into a cafeteria and then to prepare and serve meals?

Father Hickey learned about the Food and Nutrition Service's child nutrition programs from a meeting of private school administrators called by Gretchen Plagge, New Mexico school lunch director, State Department of Education.

Mrs. Plagge emphasized that schools without cafeteria facilities can use newly developed meal delivery systems approved by USDA to provide breakfast or lunch to their children.

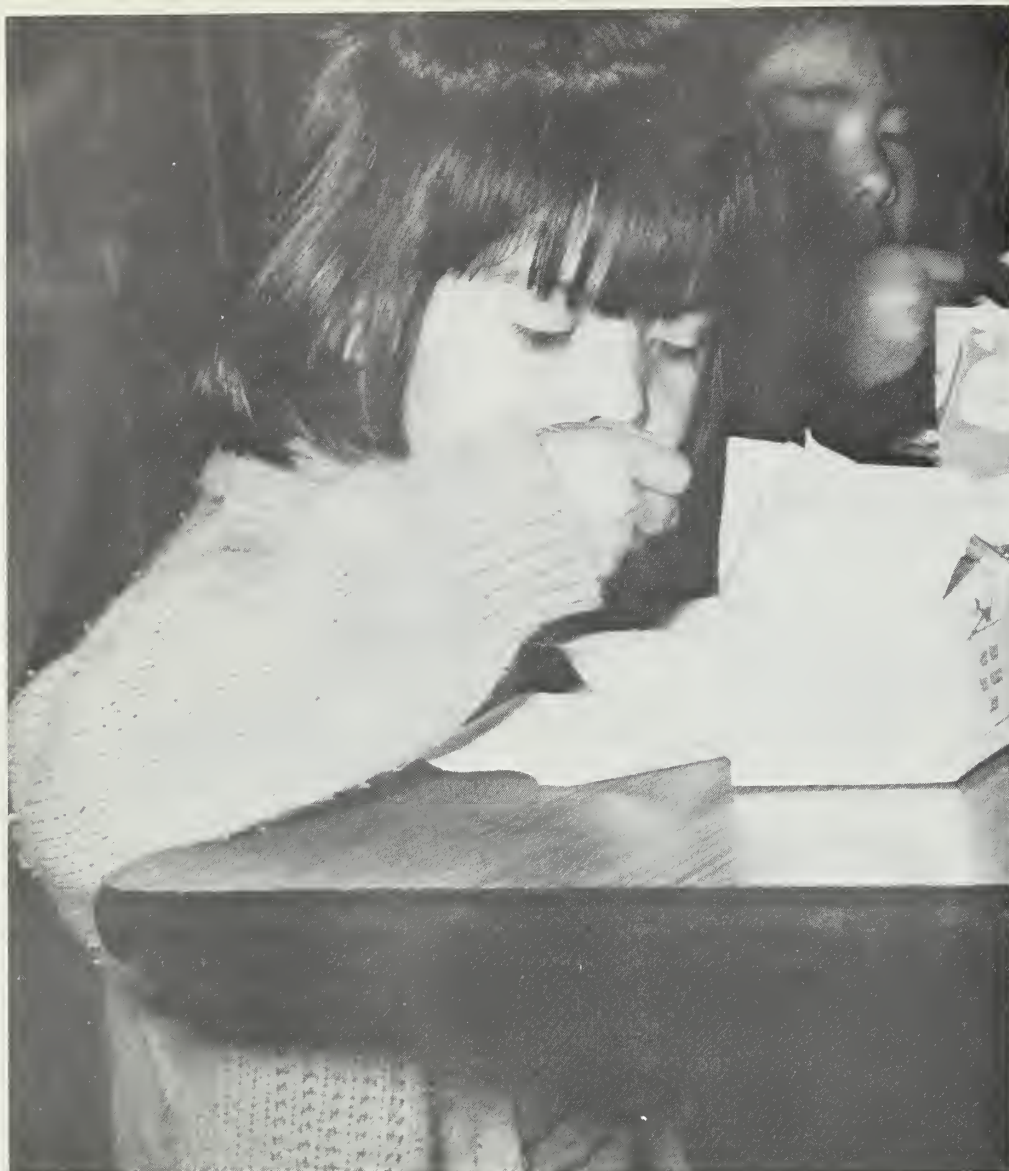
As a result of this meeting in April 1971 the San Diego Mission School began serving breakfast in the classroom to the children. A typical breakfast: ready-to-eat cereal with milk and bananas or peanut butter and jelly sandwich with fruit and milk.

"The difference the food made in the way the students tackled their lessons," Father Hickey said, "made us want to try a lunch program, too."

Father Hickey and Sister Bernice who is principal of the San Diego Mission School, discussed their school lunch needs with Mrs. Mary Jewell, a school lunch consultant from the New Mexico State Department of Education. She encouraged them to start a lunch program that they could handle with their limited resources.

The "cup-can" program, they decided, looked as if it might best meet the needs of the Mission School. First tried successfully in Philadelphia schools without kitchen facilities, the





Head start and first grade students (above) enjoy the lunches served by a group of volunteers. The volunteers work 3 to 5 hours daily for a week at a time, preparing food, setting tables, and cleaning up. With the program running smoothly, Governor Toya and Father Hickey (opposite page) join the children for lunch.

program uses canned entrees which can be quickly and easily heated in small and inexpensive electric ovens. The entrees are served to the children in the original containers, thus eliminating cost of trays and steam tables.

With a sandwich of buttered bread, meat, cheese or other protein, plus vegetables and/or fruit and whole milk, the cup-can lunch meets the requirements of the USDA Type A lunch.

For a lunchroom, Patrick E. Toya, vice president of the Parents' Club, and other men of the Jemez Pueblo converted an old building into comfortable quarters equipped with tables and benches.

"Nearly all 150 children in school eat in this lunchroom every day," says Sister Bernice, explaining that the youngest children are served first, then others. "By staggering the classes, we can serve all our students with the help of three or four volun-

teer workers and our paid manager."

Volunteers, mostly mothers of children in school, come early enough to prepare sandwiches, fruits, salads, or vegetables such as carrot and celery sticks.

The sandwiches are a favorite because they're made with the same kind of bread the children eat at home.

Several mothers volunteer weekly to bake bread. They use the time-honored methods of their tribe, baking the bread in an outdoor oven, called "horno." The horno looks like a giant old-fashioned beehive, 5 or 6 feet high with a domed roof, and large enough in circumference at the base to hold 5 or 6 dozen loaves of Indian bread.

The ovens are made of adobe bricks with the walls of the inside base lined with large rocks, which become very hot from the wood fire built in the oven.

When the rocks reach the desired temperature, judged by the way a little water sizzles on them, the fire is raked out of the oven and the round loaves go in.

The women use the traditional long wooden shovel to move the loaves in and out of the oven. However, some bakers have added a modern touch—heavy aluminum pie pans to hold the bread so that it doesn't touch the oven floor.

The bread costs the lunch program practically nothing since it's made with USDA-donated flour and other items.

Since the Jemez Pueblo lies off the beaten trade routes from distribution centers, food deliveries are a problem and require a lot of planning.

"We can get fresh milk delivered only three times a week, so we had to get a large refrigerator to store enough supplies for several days," explains Father Hickey.

Canned foods are purchased in case lots about once a semester. Only such large purchases make it profitable for a business firm to deliver so far away.

For fresh fruits and vegetables, Father Hickey drives to Albuquerque, about 50 miles away, to shop.

To help the school determine how much to purchase and what to select, Mrs. Jewell developed a set of weekly menus with itemized buying and preparation guides.

Lack of plate waste is one sure sign of the children's acceptance of the cup-can lunch—less than half a gallon for 150 children on most days.

"There's no plate waste when we serve chili and beans or meat balls and spaghetti soup," points out Cecilia Yepa, a volunteer mother of six children with her youngest daughter still in school.

Governor of the Jemez Pueblo, Pat Toya, is proud of the way his people have responded to this community project.

"I know how good the lunch is," he said, "because I have eaten with the children when no one was expecting me."









*At home with the Lafrosts in a new housing project for senior citizens in Attleboro, Mr. Castillo (left) discusses Drive to Serve and donated foods.*



## **"Drive to Serve" Comes to Attleboro**

A LITTLE MORE than 10 months ago, Congresswoman Margaret M. Heckler heard about a program that delivers USDA-donated foods to house-bound senior citizens. She also heard that the program is boosting the dietary level of the low-income participants who suffer from general ill health or lack of transportation.

So she thought about a similar program for her Massachusetts constituents and phoned the Food and Nutrition Service.

Officials of the Food Distribution Division promptly set up a meeting with State representatives and others interested in running the program, and before long, Drive to Serve was operating in Attleboro, Mass.

A cooperative Federal-State effort, Drive to Serve provides nutritious donated foods to eligible senior citizens who are unable to pick up their monthly food allotment. The program uses student volunteers to deliver the food and adults to act as recipients' proxies. Every community is eligible for Drive to Serve if it participates in

the Family Food Donation Program.

In Attleboro, a chief jewelry manufacturing center, much of the credit for the success of Drive to Serve goes to 41 teenagers who have devoted time and money to make sure the elderly have enough to eat.

Once a month, the youths are dismissed from class an hour early to drive to the distribution center to pick up food orders for 126 persons, then separate into groups and set out on delivery.

At each household the youths chat with recipients, ask them to sign for the free food package, and assist in unpacking the wholesome commodities. All of the volunteers are students at Attleboro Senior High School and members of the Key Club, a high school chapter of the Kiwanis.

Recently, in recognition of their outstanding service, the students were honored at a hometown press ceremony. Each received a handshake and USDA certificate from Congresswoman Heckler, who applauded their unselfish deed.

"One of the basic needs of the elderly," the Congresswoman told the students, "is good nutrition. Someone has to get them in the habit of eating properly and of taking care of their bodies. This is where you stepped in. Your involvement in Drive to Serve will be an inspiration to other parts of the country."

Also extending congratulations to the students were FNS Food Distribution Division Director Juan del Castillo, Attleboro Mayor Raymond Macomber, State Representative Max Volterra, and State Senator John Parker.

After the ceremony the students loaded their cars with pre-boxed food and began a regular delivery.

At each stop Mr. Castillo, who rode with two of the student volunteers, tried to find out reactions to the foods and how the program might be improved.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lafron, victims of cardio-vascular disorders, said, "There is nothing we think that needs to be changed. We enjoy everything we get."

Mrs. Lafron then showed her visitors a dish she had prepared from donated foods and commented, "It's so good it's almost gone."



At the residence of the Charles Devaneys, the national food distribution director found that actions speak louder than words. Mrs. Devaney was so excited about receiving her donated foods that she opened a can of the apple juice and offered a cup to each of her guests.

"I was hoping for apricot juice," she joked. "That way I would have it all to myself." All joking aside, Mrs. Devaney spoke for all the elderly in Drive to Serve when she said that if it weren't for the students, she and her husband would have to borrow someone to pick up their free foods or make do without them.

Over on Guild Street Mrs. Mary Fontaine told Mr. Castillo that she likes everything. "From the donated shortening I make pie crusts, muffins from the corn meal, and goulash from the macaroni. And my pea soup . . ." (Her voice trailed off in a tone suggesting that her pea soup, also made with donated ingredients, is something to be desired.)

Local officials feel that Drive to Serve is helping the food distribution program be even more beneficial to their constituency since 325 of 351 areas in Massachusetts have chosen this type of food assistance.

Back at the distribution center, Mr. Castillo commended Mrs. Pearl Fine for helping to launch the drivers-aid program. After the meeting last fall, Mrs. Fine encouraged her women's group, the Quota Club, to assume responsibility for delivery of food to the elderly.

Mrs. Fine's husband Sam was also praised, along with a group of retired gentlemen, for boxing the food that students deliver and mapping out delivery routes.

Speaking of the program in Attleboro and across the country, Mr. Castillo said: "Drive to Serve has the practical advantage of not costing taxpayers money while contributing to the welfare of young and old."

As for the volunteers' efforts, perhaps the motto of the Attleboro chamber of Commerce explains it best: "Every individual . . . owes a portion of their time . . . towards the betterment of the area in which they live." ☆

## OPEN CAMPUS- kids still like school lunches

TOO FREQUENTLY THE opening of a high school campus during the noon hour spells disaster for the school lunch program.

For Miriam Cade, food service director of the Leavenworth, Kansas, school system, allowing students to leave school at noon offered a challenge to her food service.

She recognized that meals would have to conform with what the students consider a tasty lunch, yet maintain the nutritional requirements for a balanced meal.

And how do you put the two together? "You include foods the students would buy at the local drive-in, mainly hamburgers or sandwiches and french fries, and add a salad, a half-pint of milk and other foods to complete a good meal plan," says Mrs. Cade.

Too, she serves her "box lunch" in disposable containers so it can be eaten anywhere. The patio adjoining the school cafeteria is a popular place, although some prefer eating "picnic style" under trees.

Mrs. Cade got the idea for the "box lunches" during a nutrition education seminar for school food service personnel held last summer at Kansas State University. The seminar was sponsored by KSU and the Food and Nutrition Service.

The school administration at first resisted the idea, fearing a litter situation, but there has been no problem.

In addition to the "box lunch," the cafeteria offers a regular meal and a choice of a fruit or vegetable salad plate which also meets Type A lunch requirements of the National School Lunch Program.

Mrs. Cade tries to maintain interest in the cafeteria by having special days honoring the football team, the debate team and others. The cafeteria also has a juke box. So instead of a disaster, the open campus ruling for Leavenworth High School has resulted in a successful diversified school lunch approach with students choosing from three different meal plans each day. ☆



*The school patio is a popular place for Leavenworth students to eat the "box lunches" which they buy in the school cafeteria. The lunches are served in disposable containers so they can be eaten anywhere.*



**O**UTWARDLY, THE LITTLE red schoolhouse in Elliston, Montana, hasn't changed much over the years. The sidewalk is faintly marked with chalk stains of countless hopscotch games, and boys still kick up dust in the pasture-like playground in front of the aging brick building that houses grades one through eight.

It's a rural school, one of many in Montana, and for generations has been the center of activity for the logging community of about 200 people just across the Great Divide from the State's capital, Helena.

Inside the school, however, things have changed—especially when the lunch bell rings. Gone from the hallway coat racks are the brown paper sacks and colorful, battered lunch boxes that once contained the energy for noontime frolicking. In their place is a hot lunch program that may be an answer to providing school lunches for rural children.

Like many rural schools, Elliston until recently had little hope of establishing a conventional hot lunch program. Equipment costs are high and space is limited. A milk program was in operation.

Elliston, however, did have a couple of things going for it. First, there was a large all-purpose room in the school's basement, serving the school during the day and the community on evenings and weekends, and there was strong parental desire to begin a school lunch program, spearheaded by an active community group called the Twenty-Seven Club.

When Brisbin Skiles, school food service supervisor for the State, asked if they would be interested in a hot lunch program that could be operated out of a small space at a beginning cost to the community of around \$500.00, Elliston parents eagerly asked, "How?"

The plan laid out for Elliston called

for canned main dishes, called "cup-can" lunches, 3 days of the week, and a lunch prepared from USDA-donated foods the other 2 days. The cup-cans, specially designed for school lunches, are heated overnight in a small, inexpensive and easily operated oven that uses about 5 cents worth of electricity. Nine different entrees are available, and with the addition of milk, bread and butter and a side dish of fruit or vegetable, they meet USDA standards for a Type A lunch.

The reason for combining the two feeding ideas, according to Skiles, was "to get the best of both programs." Wanted was a program that utilized USDA-donated foods, and that took into consideration such things as labor and operating costs, and the child's nutrition experience afforded through meal variety. Because the cup-can is served 3 days a week, the kitchen can be equipped at about half the cost by buying fewer and smaller less expensive appliances.

With USDA nonfood assistance funds paying 75 percent and the community's portion of the equipment cost donated by the Twenty-Seven Club, the Elliston kitchen was outfitted and ready to begin the pilot program in November 1971.

Throughout the school year, club members donated their services to prepare lunches, set up tables and other tasks connected with the school lunch operation. In addition, to encourage all students to participate, children who can afford to pay are charged only 25 cents per lunch, with the difference between that and the actual lunch cost made up by the Club. The Club donates \$100.00 a month to the school lunch program, raised from bake sales, dances, raffles, and other activities. Those mothers who aren't able to work on a regular basis help by baking, cooking and babysitting for the preschool children of mothers working at the school. Volunteer hours at the school total about 50 hours per week.

Participation in the program by the 60 children has been well over 90 percent throughout the year and has on occasions reached total participation.

Children are encouraged to eat as

much as they want, but when some of the older boys were "somehow downing" the contents of three cup-cans, the volunteer mothers had to draw the line. "The children aren't starving," one volunteer explained, "just active, growing and liked the food."

The popularity of the lunch is second only to the popularity of cleaning up after lunch. Volunteer mothers have been joined by volunteer schoolchildren who have signed up en masse for the chore. They are selected only if they have managed to keep up with their school work.

The success of the pilot program at Elliston is evidenced by the number of visitors dropping in to view the operation. In addition, other rural Montana and Idaho schools have expressed an interest in the program.

While Skiles is impressed and happy with the volunteer efforts of the Elliston mothers, he feels that volunteer help on the scale of Elliston isn't vital to the establishment of a school lunch program in a rural school. He believes that any school, regardless of size or location, can provide hot nutritious lunches for their children. ☆

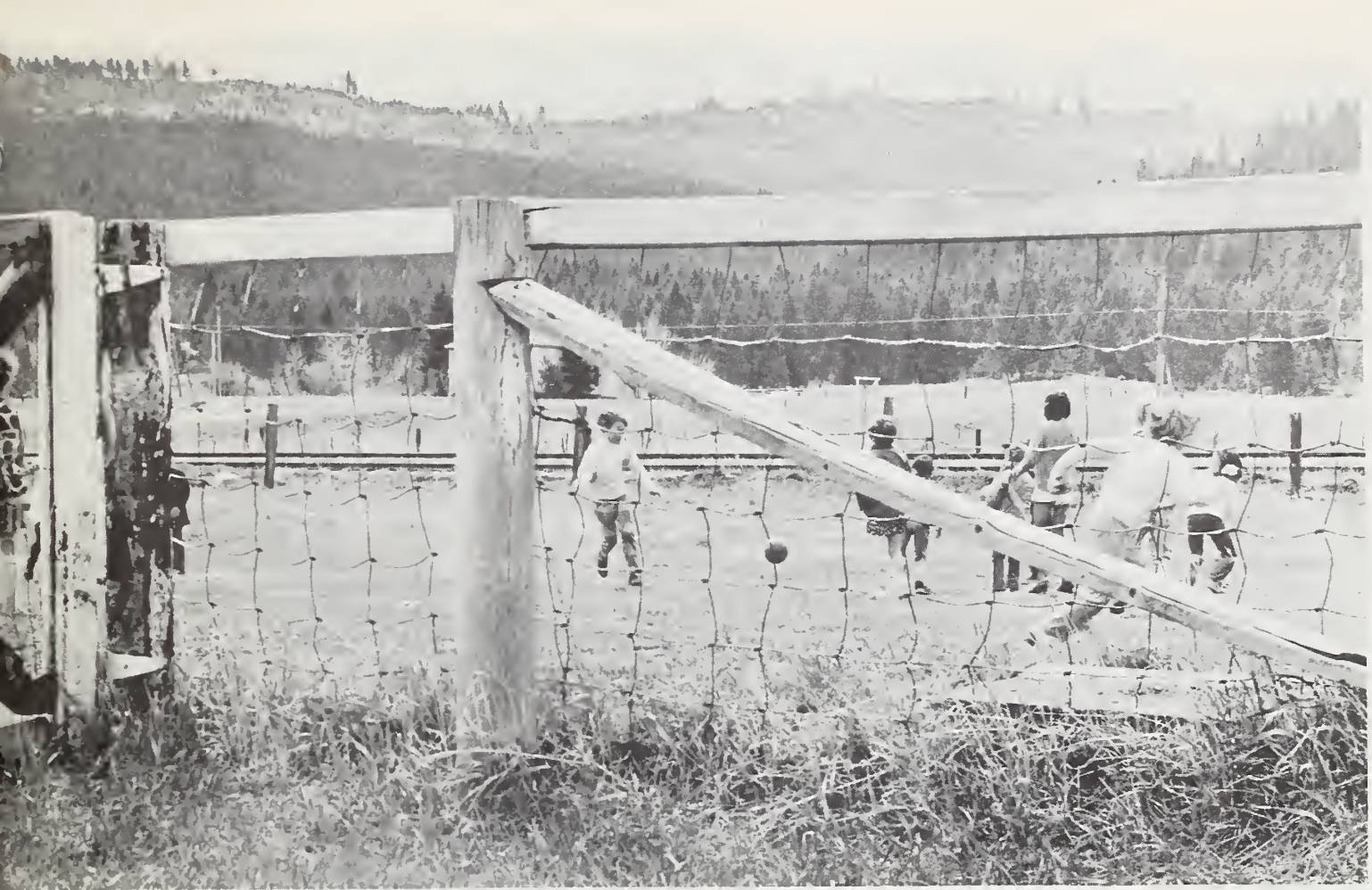


Long before it's time for the noon recess in the grassy playground, volunteers are busy preparing lunch in Elliston's new lunchroom. On the 3 days that cup-can lunches are served, the volunteers set the tables with flatware, bread and butter on paper plates, fruit and napkins. At lunchtime the children pick up the cup-cans and milk from the serving area. On the other 2 days, Elliston youngsters receive hot meals prepared with USDA-donated foods. As the students line up (left), the well-organized volunteer staff has everything ready.

## Rural town builds a Lunch program.

By Benedicto Montoya





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**"T**HE FOOD STAMP program helps a lot of people and we aren't about to break the regulations," says Mr. J. B. Woodward of the Piggly Wiggly Food Store in Summerville, Georgia. Mr. Woodward's attitude is one example of what makes the Food Stamp Program work: voluntary compliance with the regulations by retailers and wholesalers.

In 160,000 food stores in April 1972, 11.5 million people spent \$285 million worth of food coupons. The Food and Nutrition Service depends on the cooperation of the grocers to keep the program running smoothly.

As with any large operation, however, there must be some supervision and training of the grocers to insure their complete understanding of the regulations and the reasons behind them. The food stamp program was established primarily to help low-income people obtain adequate, nutritious diets. Thus participants re-

ceive only enough coupons to purchase a nutritionally adequate diet; the amounts persons pay for their coupons are intended to leave participants enough cash to purchase nonfood necessities. If the coupons a person receives are diverted to other uses, the purpose of the program is frustrated and the person's chances of receiving an adequate diet are greatly reduced.

Food Stamp Officers in Charge (OIC's) located across the country are the key to the understanding and acceptance of the regulations by retailers. They are there to maintain the integrity of the program and to protect the honest merchant from unfair competition.

Wallace Hill, OIC, and his assistant, Lowell Kennedy, supervise 19 counties in northwest Georgia. As vastly different in personality as in looks, the two men complement each other in their work. Wallace Hill's approach is straightforward and candid. He believes in his job and

he means business when he talks to his grocers.

Lowell Kennedy, of slighter build, with just as strong a belief in his job, has a firm but persuasive manner about him that would lead you to trust him with your innermost secrets. Both of these men enjoy their work and their one-to-one contact with the grocers.

Each OIC serves all the retailers and wholesalers within his field office boundaries. Wally Hill has close to 800 food stores in his area. He must educate and assist grocers new in the program, as well as obtain their continued voluntary compliance with the regulations.

One of the toughest jobs men like Wally Hill and Lowell Kennedy have is preventing or eliminating compliance problems. They spend a large portion of their time educating the retailers and the community-at-large about the food stamp program.

County welfare departments inform food stamp recipients of the



regulations, but as a small store owner noted to Lowell Kennedy one day, "Some people will try to mess you up if you let 'em." A conscientious grocer, he wanted to make sure he knew all the rules.

The regulations are few and relatively simple. Wally Hill remarked, "Small retailers are sometimes hesitant to enter the program until they get the facts and realize that the regulations are not so difficult."

When a new area is designated to have food stamps, the OIC holds an introductory meeting for all the interested retailers. Mr. Hill uses a slide series prepared by FNS to set the stage for his presentation. He then meets with individual retailers to authorize them to accept coupons at their stores and to answer any questions which they have. During the meeting and subsequent interviews, Mr. Hill generously provides retailers with informational pamphlets and posters prepared for their use by FNS.

Once Wally Hill authorizes a store, he or Lowell makes periodic visits to reemphasize the importance of complying with the regulations. In making regular visits the OIC can often avert a real problem by catching it early.

Mr. Hill and Mr. Kennedy may also offer their services in the training of store personnel and will offer to supply the stores with copies of a retailer guide and a cashier's training manual designed to further aid retailers and their employees in complying with program regulations. Some of the larger retail stores and chains include food stamp information in their own employee training sessions and training manuals.

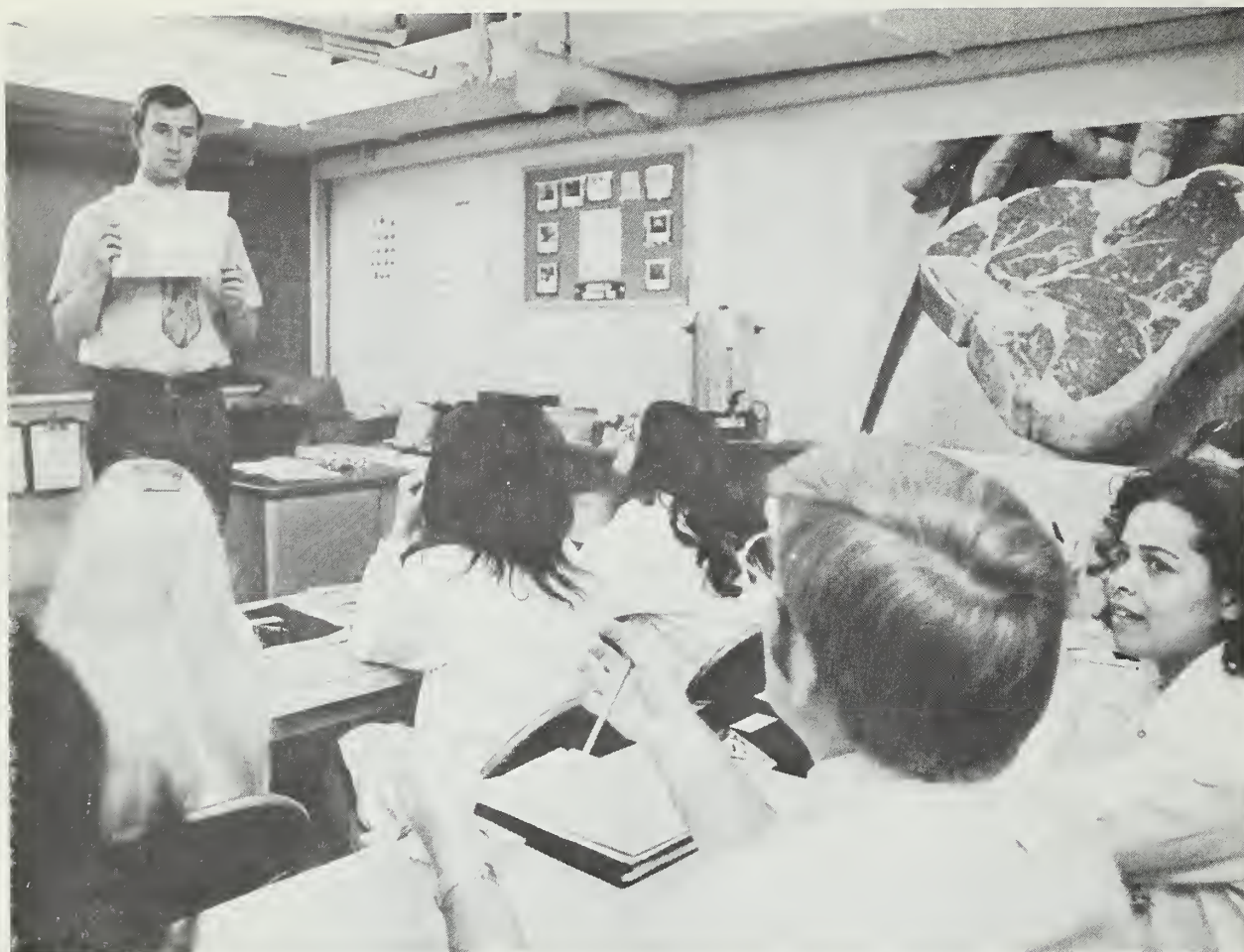
Despite all this training, there are violations. Mr. Hill and his counterparts learn of these violations through their regular visits, complaints from recipients or other grocers, reports from cooperating agencies whose assistance is actively solicited, or through the automated analysis of redemptions of authorized stores.

Regulatory and other government agencies are responding more and more favorably to requests for endorsement and aid in identifying violators and encouraging compliance. Responses range from public en-



Part of the job of OIC Wally Hill and his assistant, Lowell Kennedy, is helping those concerned with the food stamp program. Mr. Hill (above) points out to a cashier items that cannot be bought with food stamps, while Mr. Kennedy (below) advises a food stamp recipient and the grocer.





*As part of their regular training program, new employees of a large metropolitan food chain learn about food stamp policies and procedures. To make sure they understand how to work with food stamps, the trainees take a short written test at the last session.*

dorsement of the program to internal training sessions. For example, one of Wally Hill's colleagues out in California worked with the Pasadena Police Department to develop a closed circuit television tape on the food stamp program as part of their police training program.

Through a computer printout sent to field offices each month, Mr. Hill is able to assure himself that stores within the same area are receiving comparable food stamp business. Those stores which have significantly different figures receive a special compliance visit to discuss the situation.

After a compliance visit Mr. Hill may send the retailer a confirming letter which documents their conversation and again reminds the retailer of the need to abide by the regulations. In cases where Mr. Hill feels violations are occurring in spite of his special compliance promotion efforts, he requests that an investigation be conducted by the Office of the Inspector General of USDA. If the investigation warrants it, a charge letter is issued and the retailer is invited to reply.

The Food Stamp Act provides that a retailer may be disqualified if viola-

tions occur at his store. The period of disqualification depends on the evidence in the investigation and the information provided by the retailer in his reply to the charge letter. Disqualification periods last from 30 days to 3 years, with the average period being 6 months.

If a retailer is disqualified, the Act also provides review rights as a safeguard to protect the grocer. The retailer can request an administrative review within a specified time after he has been notified that he will be disqualified from the program. This temporarily halts any further action on his case until the Food Stamp Review Officer completes the review and notifies the grocer of his determination.

FNS employs Food Stamp Review Officers separate and distinct from the Food Stamp Division to work exclusively on review cases.

The Food Stamp Review Officer has the final say within FNS in the case. He can uphold or reduce the period of disqualification, have a warning letter issued instead of disqualification action, or decide that no further administrative action be taken.

But even if the disqualification is

upheld, the retailer has still another option. He can request judicial review. An increasing number of retailers make this request. The case is tried as a civil suit, and the retailer has the right to confront witnesses.

At the time a disqualification becomes effective, a press release is issued by USDA and a notification letter goes out to all other retailers and to bankers in the area. Publicity is one of the best deterrents Hill and Kennedy have against violators. As Mr. Charles Harris, manager of Hurley's Foods in Trion, Georgia, said, "Reading about other grocers being disqualified and fined makes us a little more alert to the regulations."

The number of merchants choosing to take part in the Food Stamp Program has grown substantially in the last few years. In March 1970, there were 108,000 participating retailers. As of March 1972, OIC's like Wally Hill are working with 160,000 grocers.

The retailer has much to gain if he participates in the program and abides by the regulations. Business usually increases when he accepts coupons. And he knows there is always a Wally Hill or a Lowell Kennedy ready to assist him in whatever way possible.





# Food Service Director "Sells" Program



*Food service director Bethel Freeman*

HOW DO YOU CONVINCE a community with the highest per capita income in the State that it needs a school lunch program?

This was the problem facing Bethel Freeman when he accepted the job as food service director for the Ponca City, Oklahoma, school system.

Ponca City, headquarters for a major oil company, 2 years ago had only a la carte food service in the high school and junior high and no food service in its nine elementary schools.

Elementary schools in the northern Oklahoma city had always operated on the "neighborhood school" concept, and all of the children were expected to go home for lunch. Even sack lunches were discouraged.

One case that pointed out the need for elementary school cafeterias involved a group of Indian children who were bussed into Ponca City

from outlying areas. These children could not go home to eat, and only a few had any food at all during the noon hour. So they were taken to one of the junior highs and given a lunch. This was unsatisfactory because it took them to unfamiliar surroundings, where they didn't eat as they should.

Other children came from homes where both parents work. As a result, the children were left to find places to eat or to prepare their own meals after buying the food at local grocery stores.

Therefore, Freeman decided to try a school lunch program last spring. When he announced the trial program, one of the teachers pleaded with him to include her school. She wanted to avoid spending such a large portion of her time taking care of children who were ill from eating "junk foods" at noon.

Still, the school administration faced a problem of acceptance, and Freeman had to "sell" the program. He decided to utilize the school's television network that presents programs throughout the day in cooperation with the local cable company. These programs not only go to the classrooms, but also to homes connected to the television cable. So Freeman and Bob Westmoreland of the audio-visual department developed a telecast on the entire school system and included information on the trial school lunch program, featuring the Parent-Teacher Association president as hostess.

"We like to think pictures of a lot of happy kids eating well-balanced meals had a lot to do with public acceptance of school lunches," said Freeman, although the program was no overnight success.

High school students especially objected to giving up the a la carte meal plan. However, the Board of Education and Dr. Allen Robson, superintendent, gave full backing to the project.

In the elementary schools lunches were almost immediately a hit. "We started off with a good percentage of elementary participation," pointed out Freeman, "and the number of children eating has risen steadily."

Floyd Lee, principal of the Jefferson Elementary School, was a firm sup-

porter of the lunch program from the very first. His school has the highest number receiving free or reduced-price lunches in the system.

"I knew from my teaching experience in other schools what a difference the program could make," he said.

"Aren't you irritable and contrary when you're hungry?" he asked. "We could see a reduction in discipline problems as soon as lunches began to be served in the school."

One of the reasons for the good acceptance is the variety of meals served in Ponca City's schools. Meal plans are developed on a 6-week basis and the same menu is seldom, if ever, repeated during this period. To attempt to win the senior high school students over, the cafeteria offers three basic meal plans each day, including a chef's salad and hamburger. All three plans meet the nutritional requirements of the Type A lunch.

However, participation, although showing some growth, remains light in the senior high.

Freeman believes the key is nutrition education. "Today, you can't tell a youngster to eat something because it's good for him. You have to explain why," he says.

To do this he's preparing to launch a nutrition education program through the science and physical education classes on the importance of a well-balanced diet. Again, the school's video setup, with television sets in all of the schools and many of the classrooms, will be the focal point.

The Oklahoma Department of Education, which administers the school lunch program in cooperation with the Food and Nutrition Service, is quick to praise the work done by Freeman in the Ponca City schools. "Before the National School Lunch Program was started in Ponca City, I've seen high school students pick up as many as eight desserts for lunch and eat nothing else," says Mrs. Frances Dobbings, State school lunch consultant.

But after almost a year, the Ponca City's school lunch program is fast becoming an integral part of the school operation. ☆



**C**HILDREN IN THE Oakland, California, public schools have two things going for them at lunch or breakfast time: commitment and dedication. These are the hallmarks of Oakland's school food service program.

The commitment was made more than a quarter-century ago. When the National School Lunch Act be-

came law in 1946, the Oakland school district began providing Type A lunches, which limited the scope of the program.

School food service gradually expanded, and by 1959 lunch service was available in two-thirds of the city's schools. Within 2 years the board of education had made a

further commitment: to provide lunches in all the city's schools. That was accomplished by the end of the 1961-'62 school year.

Up to the mid-1960's Oakland schools accepted donated commodities but no other Federal assistance. The lunch program was expected to be largely self-supporting. Then at

*By Robert Marburger*

## IT TAKES MORE THAN FOOD TO FEED CITY KIDS





the urging of Merle Hagerty, who was at that time Oakland school lunch director and is now Deputy Director of the Child Nutrition Division of the Food and Nutrition Service, the school district decided to make the benefits of the National School Lunch Program and related assistance available to all Oakland schoolchildren. Oakland's schools now take advantage of the full range of Federal and State programs for meal service at school.

Oakland's school food service program has become a fair-sized business, operating on a budget of \$3.1 million in the 1971-'72 term.

Average daily school attendance is about 62,000. Average daily participation in the school lunch and breakfast programs is about 27,500. That's almost 45 percent, an unusually high figure for a core city school system.

Those 27,500 kids can be found in all of Oakland's 90 schools and in 16 child care centers. About three-fourths of them are served lunch free. Walk into any of the city's schools from the ghetto to the wooded, wealthy areas in the hills and you'll find children from low-income families who don't have to pay for their lunches.

Or, more correctly, you won't find them. The district has made a great effort to assure the anonymity of children who receive free meals. Oakland used to have a meal ticket system with the children buying the tickets (or receiving them free) and turning them in at the end of the lunch line. But the tickets had to be code-numbered for free lunches, which made them easy to trace, resulting in some trafficking in tickets.

As planning for the 1971-'72 term began, the district's school lunch advisory committee, which included teachers, principals, and parents, scrapped the ticket system in favor of a discount pre-payment plan. Children get a small discount as they sign up for 10 meals and pay in advance. Those who receive free lunches sign up the same way but don't pay. Special clerks have been hired for each school to handle the system. The clerk, who checks off the child's name at the end of the lunch line, is probably the only one in the

lunchroom who knows who has paid.

Oakland does not serve reduced-price lunches. For those children who pay full price, it's 45 cents or 10 lunches for \$4.25 prepaid in elementary schools, 50 cents or 10 for \$4.75 in secondary schools.

Free or reduced-price breakfasts are available in 12 schools in low-income areas and free breakfasts only are offered in four especially needy schools. Frances McGlone, director of food services and nutrition education, said, "We want very much to expand the breakfast program but funding, even with USDA help, is just too limited for us to do that now. It's high on the priority list, though."

The school district also provides meal and supplemental service for Oakland's child care centers, which is located on or near school grounds and is operated by the school district. The child care centers were set up by the State of California soon after World War II sent many fathers into the armed forces and mothers into defense work. Now jointly funded by the State and Federal governments, they remain a needed service for low-income working mothers. Open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day, including holidays, they offer breakfast, morning and afternoon supplements, and a Type A lunch.

Not all schools are able to provide hot meals. This necessitates a satellite system for sack or box lunches in some schools. Both hot and sack lunches meet the Type A requirements.

The endproduct of the system is the food the children eat. A recent menu is typical: beef enchiladas, Spanish rice, carrot sticks, buttered cornbread, and chilled peaches. The sack lunch that same day: salami and cheese sandwich, potato chips, carrot sticks, banana, and peanut cream patty. Milk is served with all meals.

Planning the menus falls to Mrs. McGlone, who says, "It's not easy planning 6 weeks in advance. We have to consider how to balance the menu to follow the Type A pattern, foods that are attractive and have an interesting contrast of color and texture, and the day of the week, since,

for example, we can't have anything on Mondays that would involve preparation a day in advance."

All of the district's 67,000 children receive advance copies of each month's menus. They are printed on brightly colored paper with a seasonal design, such as a cornucopia for November, holly leaves and berries for December. More significantly, Mrs. McGlone includes a nutrition education tip on every menu. The April 1972 menu, for instance, noted: "Minerals make up most of the hard tissues of the body, such as bones and teeth. We need large amounts of calcium and phosphorus. We find these minerals in milk, cheese, ice cream, egg yolk, and leafy green vegetables."

"That's an idea I picked up at the Nutrition Education Seminar at Utah State last summer," said Mrs. McGlone, referring to one of a series of conferences for school food service people co-sponsored by USDA and land grant universities in each region of the United States. The Utah State seminar, Mrs. McGlone added, was "excellent."

Typical of local school lunch directors, Mrs. McGlone takes a deep personal interest in the nutritional well-being of the thousands of children in her charge for lunch, breakfast and snacks each day. "We found that our supplier of frozen hamburger patties did not use iodized salt," she said. "When I pointed out to them what an important customer we were, they were persuaded to use iodized salt, at least on the days when they run our order."

Mrs. McGlone also noted that the University of California's dietetic internship program is now affiliated with the Oakland school lunch department as part of their program. They get credits and applied experience and we get the benefit of their expertise, their fresh outlook on our problems, and part of the university's resources."

"Reflecting on it," she said, "I think nutrition education is the most important thing we do. Hopefully, by learning to eat nutritious meals, the children set a pattern for life. If you provide good food there will be good health."

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